

REMARKS

Claims 1-6, 8-12 and 15 are now pending in the application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks contained herein. Applicant's representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesy extended during the interview on October 31, 2006. The claim amendments contained herein were discussed and it was agreed that they overcome the prior art.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS

Claims 10 and 15 stand objected to because of various informalities. Applicant amends claims 10 and 15 according to the suggestions of the Examiner. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 and 9-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Takizawa et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,357,849). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Notwithstanding, applicant elects to amend claim 1 to clarify the claimed subject matter. Claim 1 calls for a device manufacturing apparatus including "a controller for executing a detection operation by said detector during loading and unloading operations of said substrate, *said loading and unloading operations being made by replacing a first substrate being the substrate currently supported on the stage with a second substrate being another substrate currently not supported on the stage*".

Applicant also amends claim 10. Claim 10 calls for a device manufacturing method including "a detection step of detecting said discharge condition, during said carrying step in which *a first substrate being the substrate currently positioned at the first position is replaced with a second substrate being another substrate currently not positioned on the first position*".

Applicant respectfully notes that in the present invention according to claims 1 and 10, (1) detection of a discharge condition of droplets discharged from a discharge nozzle is performed *during* loading and unloading of substrates, and (2) the loading and unloading of the substrates are made by replacing *a first substrate being one of the substrates currently positioned on a stage (a first position) with a second substrate being another of the substrates currently not positioned on the stage (the first position)*.

On the other hand, Takizawa et al. neither discloses nor suggests, at least, detecting a discharge condition of droplets discharged from a discharge nozzle *during* loading and unloading of printing papers P, wherein the loading and unloading of papers P are made by replacing a first printing paper P being one of the printing papers P, currently positioned on a stage (a first position) with *a second printing paper P being another of the printing papers P, currently not positioned on the stage (the first position)*.

Accordingly, the claimed invention includes the above-mentioned features (1) and (2) which are neither disclosed nor suggested in Takizawa et al. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 1 and 10 of the present invention should be allowable.

Furthermore, dependent claims 2 to 6, 8, 9, 11 and 12 also should be allowable due to their dependency on allowable claims 1 and 10.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takizawa (U.S. Pat. No. 6,357,849) in view of Bruch et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,814,422). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 5 and 8 should be allowable due to their dependency on allowable claim 1.

Claim 6 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takizawa (U.S. Pat. No. 6,357,849) in view of Hah (U.S. Pat. No. 6,371,590). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 6 should be allowable due to its dependency on allowable claim 1.

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takizawa (U.S. Pat. No. 6,357,849) in view of Cleary et al. (U.S. Pat. Pub. No. 2002/0149660). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 15 calls for a method for manufacturing a device including the feature that "during the loading of a *second substrate not positioned on the stage*, onto the stage or unloading of the first substrate positioned on the stage, testing the discharge head by passing droplets therefrom through a light beam".

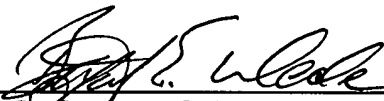
Based on the same reason as that explained for rejected claims 1 and 10, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 15 should be allowable.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action and the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: Nov. 1, 2006

By: 
G. Gregory Schivley
Reg. No. 27,382
Bryant E. Wade
Reg. No. 40,344

HARNESS, DICKEY & PIERCE, P.L.C.
P.O. Box 828
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48303
(248) 641-1600

[GGS/BEW/pvd]